

Wilmington Man Arrested for Human Trafficking



NEWS RELEASE

DELAWARE STATE POLICE

Superintendent Colonel Nathaniel McQueen Jr.

United States Department of Homeland Security

Resident Agent in Charge Jonathan Free

Presented by Public Information Officer, Master Corporal Gary Fournier

Rehoboth Beach- The Human Trafficking Task Force comprised of the Delaware State Police, the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations and the Delaware Department of Justice have arrested a Wilmington man in connection with a human trafficking ring.

On Friday September 2, 2016, detectives assigned to the Delaware State Police Troop 4 Major Crimes Unit received information that **Marcus P. Smith**, 32 of Wilmington, was

running a prostitution ring out of a Rehoboth area motel. Detectives and Special Agents with Homeland Security began conducting surveillance on the hotel as well as communicating directly with the phone number associated with the prostitution advertisements listed on www.backpage.com.

On Saturday September 3, 2016 when Marcus Smith and two females exited the hotel, troopers and task force members conducted a traffic stop on his vehicle and Smith was taken into custody without incident. A search of Smith revealed he was in possession of over \$1,400.00 in suspected prostitution proceeds. He and the two female victims, as well as Smith's 6 month old daughter, were all transported back to Troop 7 in Lewes.

Through the investigation it was learned that over the last several month Smith traveled to various hotels throughout the state of Delaware and used coercion, verbal abuse and the withholding of heroin to control the behavior of the victims. He posted advertisements utilizing the website <http://www.backpage.com> and negotiated with potential clients and set all prices. All proceeds from prostitution activities went back to Smith and the female victims involved were provided with heroin, along with basic items such as food and clothing.

Marcus Smith was charged with two counts of Human Trafficking – Sexual Servitude, and Endangering the Welfare of a Child. He was arraigned at JP3 and committed to Sussex Correctional Institution on \$105,000.00 cash bond.

Temporary lodging was established for the two female victims by the Delaware State Police Victim Services Unit and the Division of Family Services was contact in reference to the 6 month old girl who was eventually turned over to the custody of a relative.

Victims or persons with information regarding the activities of Marcus Smith are asked to please contact Detective J. Rowley at 302-752-3801 or Troop 4 Major Crimes Unit at 302-856-5850. Information may also be provided by calling [Delaware Crime Stoppers](http://www.delaware.crimestoppersweb.com) at 1-800-TIP-3333, via the internet at www.delaware.crimestoppersweb.com, or by sending an anonymous tip by text to 274637 (CRIMES) using the keyword "DSP."



Marcus P. Smith

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